

REMARKS

In the Communication dated January 18, 2008, the Examiner responded to the Decision of the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences dated September 27, 2007. More specifically, in the Decision, the rejection of claims 1-10, 13-19, and 22-29 was affirmed, and the rejection of claims 11-12, 20-21, and 30-31 was reversed. Applicants have amended the claims herein as follows: claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 11, claim 13 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 21, and claim 22 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 30.

Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made in compliance with the outstanding Communication and with the Decision of the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. No new subject matter has been added to the application with the amendment to the claims presented herewith. Furthermore, Applicants are not conceding in this application that the claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner indicate allowability of claims 1-10, 12-20, 22-29, and 31, and that the application pass to issue. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of the application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

For the reasons outlined above, an allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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